TRADITIONAL MARTINIST ORDER

ORATORY SECTION

FIRST DEGREE

LESSON FIVE

"*It is not the head which is necessary to advance in Truth; it is the heart*."

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FIRST DEGREE LESSON FIVE

CONCURRENCE

In his book entitled *The Golden Verses of Pythagoras*, Fabre d' Olivet explores the topic of Will, Destiny and Providence, a major theme of this monograph. We offer you a sample of his work:

Pythagoras acknowledged two motives for human actions, the power of the Will, and the necessity of Destiny. He suggested that both were behind a fundamental law called "Providence," which they also emanate. The first movement was free, and the second constrained, so that humanity was placed between two opposite natures. The power of the will was exercised on things to do and the future and the necessity of Destiny on the things done and the past. According to Pythagoras, it is the past that was born in the future, and the future that forms the past; and the meeting of the one and the other that engenders the always-existing present. Thus, Freedom reigns in the future; Necessity in the past, and Providence in the present.

Nothing happens by chance, but rather by the union of fundamental laws that human Will either follows or disobeys. The agreement between Will and Providence constitute the Good; and Corruption is born from their opposition. Humanity received, in order to travel through our time on Earth, three forces appropriate to the three changes in our being and all three are linked to our Will. The first, attached to our body, is instinct; the second, dedicated to our soul, is virtue; the third, belonging to our intellect, is science and wisdom.

Fabre d' Olivet (1767 - 1825)

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THE HIERARCHY OF LIGHT

Dear Supplicant,

I greet you before the Luminaries of the Traditional Martinist Order!

You may have noticed that each monograph begins with the ritualistic formula: *"I greet you before the luminaries of the Traditional Martinist Order!"* This formula is evidence of the importance that our Order accords to the symbolism of light, and it is precisely this symbolism that we are going to study today.

Light is often associated with knowledge. You should understand that the goal of our Order is not to train individuals to become scholars or dogmatic thinkers, but humble students vowed to the quest for eternal Truth. However, Martinism does not pretend to possess the monopoly of this Truth and it respects what other traditional and initiatory organizations teach on this subject. The same Truth shines beyond all traditions and various religions, and none of these can claim to have dominion over it. As an analogy, while the summit of a mountain is unique, there are many paths to reach it; and when attained the view is the same for all.

The idea of a unique light having different expressions was the foundation of the Mysteries of Memphis, Eleusis and Mithras. The priests of these different Mystery schools were Initiates and knew that all beliefs descended from the same esoteric Knowledge. Unfortunately, this unity of spirit has disappeared today and a great division now exists between the leaders of today's religions. This is unfortunate, because it is obvious that a mutual understanding between all religious leaders would contribute to world peace and would greatly help humanity in its progress.

The quest for light leads men and women to acquire knowledge in diverse fields, but technology has taken on more importance and this has led to excessive materialism. It is regrettable, because humanity can only evolve properly if a spiritualistic direction is taken. In fact, the material world and the spiritual world are united in the same process, which is the process of life. Also, to be only interested in one of these two worlds and excluding the other can lead to a dead end. However, even if a connection exists between those two worlds, there is still a hierarchy. Thus, the material world depends on the spiritual world and only exists because of it. On the other hand, the spiritual world does not necessarily need the material world to exist, because it has other modes of expression.

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Now note that the pantacle on the altar in your Oratory is composed of three colors: white, red and black. In the Martinist Tradition, these three colors symbolize the three Forces that govern the Universe, which correspond to the three planes of Creation: Divinity, Humanity and Nature. If Humanity is placed between Divinity and Nature, it is because we are the mediators and belong to both the material world and the spiritual world. Even though we have this mediating function, the Power that we represent remains in seed form. In other words, it must grow progressively to manifest its potential and become one of the three Powers of the universe

The Martinist Tradition associates the three Forces of the universe to a trinity called Providence, Will, and Destiny. Providence belongs to Divinity and Destiny to Nature. Humanity, placed between Providence and Destiny, possesses Will. It is while using this faculty that we can become the mediator of Creation, the point of union between the inferior and the superior. According to Fabre d' Olivet, Moses, Pythagoras, and the Chinese mystics understood this hierarchical conception of the universe. This idea is difficult to comprehend intellectually. For now, we will say that nothing can escape the influence of this ternary, except Divinity who enfolds it in impenetrable Unity.

Let us now consider the three Forces of the universe starting with the most inferior one: Destiny. This is the Force of Nature and of its laws. These laws correspond to powerful energies and are continually acting in the material world. Although humans are of divine origin, we are living in the world of Destiny, a world of fatality that is governed by the laws of Nature. As the child grows, the divine seed that the child carries develops, allowing better mastery of the body, acquiring independence, and progressively reaching freedom. It is then that the child can become free from Destiny to apply individual Will and manifest the second Force of the universe. As for the third Force, Providence, it corresponds to the living law emanated from Divinity. All natural laws emanate from it and all causes draw their origin from it. Its goal is the perfection of all beings and its mode of action is time. We can say that Providence is the invisible knot of universal events.

The notions that we have just considered are difficult to formulate in simple words. Therefore, we will use the analogy that Fabre d' Olivet used to explain the modes of action of these three Forces. If we hold in our hand an acorn, we can hardly understand the force giving it the power to produce an oak having a precise shape, with roots, a trunk and leaves. Life inscribed in this acorn is an expression of universal Life that infuses all things, and this universal Life Force is Providence. It manifests itself every time favorable conditions are met. The resulting

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oak is then the manifestation of the Principle specific to it, or its Destiny. But humanity can decide the future of the acorn. We can put it in soil and help it manifest its Destiny, or we can crush it. Our Will can therefore act on Destiny, but not on Providence. Indeed, the action of crushing an acorn has no consequence on the Universal Life that infused it. This Universal Life will manifest under another form. We can therefore see that Destiny, as opposed to Providence, needs specific conditions to exist, while Providence does not need anything to be. Thus, we can say that to exist is the hallmark of Destiny, whereas to be is the hallmark of Providence.

We can establish correspondences between Providence, Will, and Destiny, as forces of the universe; and Thought, Will, and Action, the Faculties by which Divinity created humanity and the universe, and which humans possessed at their origin. According to Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, humanity lost the use of these faculties because of the Fall. However, we still possess them in a dormant state, and it is up to us to awaken them and use them again. We have the power to exercise mastery over Providence, Will, and Destiny, as they manifest in our existence. Indeed, such is the goal of our spiritual evolution.

The three Forces of the universe form a ternary hierarchy that is symbolized by the three colors on the pantacle. The black color symbolizes the material world where natural laws preside. However, these laws operate in an impersonal manner that sometimes seems mechanical to us. We can marvel at Nature because of its beauty, but Nature can also frighten us by the terrifying forces that it unleashes, such as storms and cataclysms. We can say that Nature acts under the impulse of a blind and unconscious Force that one could call chance, if chance really exists. This blind Force is precisely what is called *Destiny* in Martinism.

The color red symbolizes humanity along the course of evolution. To be more precise, this color symbolizes humans who oscillate between the state of unconsciousness and the state of pure consciousness. Thanks to the divine seed that we carry, we can attain freedom through our Will. Since Will in Humanity is as powerful as Destiny, it can lead us to the mastery of life and give us access to Providence. We thus become mediators between the spiritual world and the material world, or in other words, we become agents of Divinity. This is the goal that each Martinist pursues in his or her quest for eternal Truth.

The color white symbolizes Providence, which corresponds to the spiritual world and Divinity itself. However, these three Forces that are Destiny, Will, and Providence form one unique universal Force occupying the center of everything that exists. This universal Force is called *Light* in the Martinist Tradition and was created “at the beginning of time” preceding the purely physical light of the Sun.

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The triadic division of the universe also applies to humanity. We are triple beings possessing a physical body, a soul, and what one calls *spirit* in the Martinist Tradition. Spirit represents the purest and most divine part of our being. The body has needs, the soul has passions, and the spirit has inspirations. The human body can be divided into three main parts: the head, the chest, and the abdomen. The abdomen is in charge of maintaining our being's vital energy and it is the stomach that assumes this function. The chest governs the passions of the soul and for this purpose uses the heart. The head manifests thoughts by means of the brain and represents the seat of the spirit.

Human beings who succeed in balancing their needs, their passions and their aspirations, live in perfect harmony. This situation is very rare, because we often let ourselves be dominated by one need or another. Most of us are only concerned with the needs of our bodies and live materialistic lives. Others act under the exclusive power of the passions of their soul and lack realism. Others may pretend to act under the direct influence of the spirit and keep themselves in the illusion of what they believe to be inspirations. Nevertheless, we are the creators of our happiness or our misfortune. Therefore, we must learn to positively apply our free will and search for happiness in a perfect equilibrium between the material and the spiritual.

May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom!

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PRACTICAL APPLICATION

World	Force	Faculty	Consciousness	Structure	Life	Body	Organ	Expression
Divinity	Providence	Thought	Pure Consciousness	Spirit	Spiritual	Head	Brain	Inspirations
Humanity	Will	Will	Conscious Unconscious	Soul	Emotional	Chest	Heart	Passions
Nature	Destiny	Action	Unconscious	Body	Material	Abdomen	Stomach	Needs

This table synthesizes the correspondences that have been indicated in this monograph. We suggest that you familiarize yourself with the contents, as this will be useful to you as you continue with your Martinist studies.

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SUMMARY

After carefully studying this monograph, read the following summary. It contains the major points that you may want to reflect and meditate on during the coming days. If you have trouble understanding one of the points, return to the explanations given in the monograph. Immerse yourself in learning the points covered in this summary before proceeding with the study of the next monograph.

- The same Truth shines beyond all traditions and various religions, and none of these can claim to have dominion over it.

- The three colors of the pantacle symbolize the three Forces governing the universe, which correspond to the three planes of Creation: Divinity, Humanity, and Nature.

- The Martinist Tradition associates the three Forces of the universe with a trinity called *Providence*, *Will*, and *Destiny*. Providence belongs to Divinity and Destiny to Nature. Humanity, placed between Providence and Destiny, possesses Will.

- We can establish a correspondence between Providence, Will and Destiny, as Forces of the universe, and Thought, Will and Action, as Faculties possessed by humanity at our origin.

- The black color corresponds to Destiny and symbolizes the material world where natural laws preside. However, these laws operate in an impersonal manner that sometimes seems mechanical to us.

- The red color corresponds to Will and symbolizes humanity, who is destined to become mediators between the spiritual world and the material world, or in other words, we become agents of Divinity.

- The white color corresponds to Providence and symbolizes the spiritual world and Divinity.

- The triadic division of Creation also applies to humanity because we each have a physical body, a soul and what we call *spirit* in the Martinist Tradition. Spirit represents the purest and most divine part of our being.

- We must learn to positively apply our free will and search for happiness in a perfect equilibrium between the material and the spiritual.

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